

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
EXTENSION SERVICE
Washington 25, D. C.

August 13, 1947
For your information

TO STATE FARM LABOR SUPERVISORS OF FLORIDA, GEORGIA, SOUTH CAROLINA, NORTH CAROLINA, VIRGINIA, MARYLAND, DELAWARE, PENNSYLVANIA, NEW JERSEY, NEW YORK, CONNECTICUT, TENNESSEE, AND OHIO

Subject: Atlantic Coast Migratory Movement

OUR MONDAY REVIEW

OF THE SITUATION in the middle Atlantic region seems to indicate that at the moment there is a pretty good balance between the supply and demand for migrant farm labor. Reports from the States show that:

In Virginia, the employment of migratory workers in Accomac County was far below normal during the past week due to excessive rainfall and blight in the tomato crop which is reported to range from 25 to 100 percent loss on different farms. By shifting workers from one grower to another, it is anticipated that the tomato harvest can be completed by the workers now available. In the Cheriton area there is a need for 125 more tomato pickers, and workers are reported leaving the area in small groups. Alex Dunton reports that growers may lose many thousands of baskets of tomatoes due to this labor shortage.

In Maryland, a major shift in migrant crews occurred over the weekend when approximately 1,500 migrants finished the potato harvest and moved north. Most of them indicated that they were going to New York, and that they had future employment. There are still about 2,600 migrants in the State, 533 of whom are in Extension or association-operated camps. The peak of tomato harvest in the Lower Shore Counties should come this week. Ample labor is available, but no surplus unless the price of tomatoes falls below the current offering of 50 cents per 5/8 basket. In that case, it is possible that the demand for pickers will fall off. About 700 of the migrants in crews leaving now are expected to return for the late bean harvest about September 15.

Delaware tomato harvest is under way and blight damage, while increasing, is not severe. There is also work in sweet corn and beans, and supply and demand for labor is about even. Frank Gordy could use a crew of 25, mostly men, at the Staytonville Camp to harvest lima beans. The wage is 60 cents an hour and there is limited truck work for the crew leader. Also 25 are needed at the Middletown Camp for tomato picking. Wages are 10 cents per basket for picking and one cent per basket to the crew leader for supervision. Limited truck work is also offered for the crew leader.

New Jersey must be getting along all right, as Jack Taylor has not reported anything to the contrary.

Pennsylvania has made good progress in preparing for peak farm labor harvest demands. Atkinson came through this week with a comprehensive report in which he says, "Contacts between growers and migrant crews have developed gradually so that it seems as though needs will be met." It is interesting to note that migrants are beginning to replace foreign workers in the fruit producing counties. One crew of white workers arrived from Winter Haven, Fla. to pick cherries in Adams County and expect to stay to pick tomatoes and peaches, and perhaps apples. Some additional workers will be needed for apples and late potatoes.

New York reports improvement in the bean area of Central New York, where last week it was reported that some acreage was being plowed under. There is a large acreage, the yield is heavy, and more pickers are needed. Cayuga County needs 75 and Erie County 75 now. Niagara County will need 50 workers, mostly for apple harvest, August 20-25. Housing is available in the new Camp Appleton, north of Lockport. Seymour Vaughan reports no evidence of arrival of most of the 1,500 migrants reported leaving Maryland last week for New York. He also reports receiving very few crew record slips from Maryland indicating movement of crews to New York. A majority of the records received fail to indicate New York destinations. He, therefore, lacks necessary vital advance information which would enable him to contact crews as they arrive and provide early employment for those not having contracts.

APROPOS OF THE ABOVE

WE AGAIN POINT OUT the importance of getting crew records NOW BEFORE CREWS MAKE A MOVE. Send copies of the record to the State of next employment and one copy to this office as indicated on the back of the record slip.

Since sending out our original request for additional coverage of crew records by field personnel, we have had the following response:

THE BOX SCORE

	<u>Crew Records</u>	<u>No. of Workers</u>
Virginia	21	134
Maryland	8	232
Delaware	1	35
Pennsylvania	0	0
New Jersey	0	0
New York	15	494
Total	45	895

There are between 15,000 and 20,000 migrants now in the area.

Samuel Johnson once said, "The future is purchased by the present."

GOOD NEWS

You will be glad to know that "Pitt" did not have to undergo another operation on his eye. A hospital verdict indicated response to treatment and as a result "Pitt" is testing his vision on the beaches of his native State.

Very truly yours,

A. D. Cobb

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Northeastern Area Director
Recruitment and Placement Division
Extension Farm Labor Program

